

HOUSE RESOLUTION 325

By Kent

A RESOLUTION to honor and commend Odell Baker for his honorable and astute service to the people of Shelby County and Tennessee.

WHEREAS, it is fitting that the members of this General Assembly should pause to specially recognize those estimable public servants who have dedicated themselves to improving the quality of life for their fellow citizens; and

WHEREAS, Odell Baker is one such estimable citizen who evinces the greatest integrity and probity in all his chosen endeavors; and

WHEREAS, a Shelby County resident for nearly sixty years, he was born in McNairy County and is the owner of Baker Furniture Company, which he founded in 1950; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Baker began his work as a community service worker in 1950, and his passion for community service has grown steadily throughout the years; and

WHEREAS, he has been a driving force in voter registration efforts since the 1960s, when he was regularly seen transporting citizens to downtown Memphis for the purpose of registering to vote; and

WHEREAS, his promotion of the importance of voting and patriotism through a variety of events such as the Germantown Charity Horse Show and the Germantown Family 4th Celebration has made him an important fixture of the Germantown community; and

WHEREAS, through the distribution of patriotic decals, bumper stickers, and yardsticks emblazoned with a reminder to vote, Odell Baker has endeavored to impress upon both young and old the power of an individual's vote; and

WHEREAS, Odell Baker has personally registered more than 30,000 citizens to vote; throughout his tenure as a community activist, Mr. Baker has distributed small, attractive signs throughout the community, motivating an untold number of additional citizens to register to vote; and

WHEREAS, during and preceding the Iraqi War, Odell Baker distributed 18,000 patriotic bumper stickers; and

WHEREAS, a member of the Normal Masonic Lodge #722, Zammon Grotto, Scottish Rite, Al Chymia Shrine, and the East Shelby County Republicans, Mr. Baker has received innumerable honors and awards from his community for his ceaseless and selfless public service, including recognition as 2003 Germantown Lions Club Citizen of the Year; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Baker has distinguished himself as a public-spirited citizen of the highest order and as an exceptional asset to his community; and

WHEREAS, his remarkable success as a public servant and civic leader is directly attributable to his reliance on the time-honored values of hard work and common sense and his uncommon ability to work well with and relate to people from all walks of life; and

WHEREAS, Odell Baker is an extremely giving person who often reaches out with compassion to people whom life has treated unkindly, and he epitomizes the ideal of the consummate professional, dedicated public servant, and reliable friend and neighbor; and

WHEREAS, his many accomplishments aside, Mr. Baker is cherished the love and companionship that he shares with his wife, Madge; and

WHEREAS, a devout Christian, he is an active member of The First Baptist Church of Memphis, where he is an inspiration to many; and

WHEREAS, Odell Baker is wholly committed to the noble precepts of public service that have earned Tennessee recognition as the "Volunteer State," and he should be specially recognized; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE ONE HUNDRED THIRD GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, that we hereby commend Odell Baker for his honorable and astute service to the good people of Tennessee as a community servant and one of his city's most invaluable citizens, salute his unswerving commitment to living the examined life with courage and conviction, and wish him all the best in his future endeavors.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that an appropriate copy of this resolution be prepared for presentation with this final clause omitted from such copy.